

From Local History to a Wider Understanding of the Past

Enriching knowledge about the Civil War and facilitating inclusive learning about the past

The Civil War in Lebanon officially ended in 1989 with the Ta'if Agreement. Three decades later, the events of the Civil War are still not taught in the official history curricular in schools. The memory of the Civil War is mostly cited in an exclusive manner, deepening conflict lines, and protraction of tensions prevails.

Our approach

In light of this, forumZFD is dedicated to support its partners to engage actively with multiple narratives of contested historical events. It has formed a strategic partnership with the Lebanese Association for History (LAH) to explore oral history as a tool to facilitate learning about the past, and to initiate inclusive intergenerational conversation about the Lebanese Civil War..

What we do

The project is set up in two phases. In phase one students from eight public schools in Mount Lebanon will collect oral histories from their communities on daily life during the Civil War. Fifteen teachers complete a series of training workshops, organized by LAH and forumZFD, on oral history as well as the importance of multi-perceptivity and non-violent communication when facilitating conversations about war and conflict. The trainings are paired with school visits. The teachers transmit the training content to their students to lay the groundwork for their oral history research project. This first phase cumulates in students from all participating schools converging to share their experiences and discuss their impressions with each other.



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| Programme Area | Dealing with the Past |
| Partner Organisations | Lebanese Association for History |
| Duration | April 2018— December 2020 |
| Budget (BMZ) | \$ 115,000 (first phase) |
| Contact Person | Jenny Munro |

IA public exhibition accompanies this meeting, sharing first results and inviting others to contribute to the second phase.

In phase two the focus is on the analysis, interpretation and dissemination of the oral histories collected. Working with the participating schools, we aim for students to collaborate with artists from different disciplines to work with the narrators' stories through a multi-perspective and intergenerational lens for students to gain a wider understanding of the past and its relationship with the present.

Our theories of change

By assisting students in conducting oral history projects, discussing findings between the schools, and working on analysis and interpretation of oral histories, we enrich knowledge about the past and facilitate inclusive learning. Using oral history as a tool to learn about contested historical events initiates intergenerational conversations for a better understanding of the past and its relationship to the present.

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